

Beginning in the early days of the library the legislature provided regular appropriations for the purchase of books. In 1816 the General Assembly set aside an annual sum of \$250 for the increase of the "public library". The money was to be spent by a joint-select committee.⁵⁶ The next year the legislators provided additional funding: all revenue resulting from library fines was to be set aside as part of the library fund. The General Assembly wasted no time in implementing the legislation. The comptroller's reports for 1818 through 1821 reveal that approximately \$1,069 was spent for books in only four years. This amount seems to correspond to the \$250 annual appropriation for the period, in addition to any fines that may have been imposed upon lethargic government patrons.⁵⁷ By this time the General Assembly intended the library to be more than a collection of documents. In December 1821 the library committee purchased books from W. Eastburn at a cost of \$92.90. The books included fourteen volumes of the works of Fielding, Raleigh's *History of the World* and twelve volumes of *Farmers Magazine*. A manuscript catalogue of the state library compiled in 1827 is evidence that the trend toward gathering a balanced collection continued.⁵⁸

The General Assembly meeting in 1821 raised to \$500 the annual appropriation for the library. Apparently because there was some question about the matter, a resolution passed in 1825 underscored the legitimacy of the earlier action.